

# Ban Johnson Figures Out Scheme to Keep Charlie Somers a League Magnate

## LEAGUE MAY OBTAIN CLEVELAND INDIANS TO ASSIST SOMERS

By LOUIS A. DOUGHER.

If Charles W. Somers is compelled finally by the bankers' committee to sell his ball club, it is possible that the American League will take it over, selling it back to him in six or eight months, if by that time he has emerged from his present financial difficulties. This scheme has been considered by the magnates, and will be determined only by the price demanded by the bankers. If the committee boosts the price to the skies, Somers may be forced to set his connection with the league he was instrumental in starting.

A tentative offer of \$100,000 has been offered to Somers to tide over his troubles, but George P. Steele, head of the committee, has turned this down. "It would simply be a gamble as to whether the coming season would be profitable," said Steele, "and in the present stage of Mr. Somers' affairs we cannot afford to gamble."

Ban Johnson is in sole charge of the negotiations going on in Cleveland, and the quiet tip is out that, if the committee will place a reasonable price on the club, a fund will be contributed by the American League to buy it. It will then be conducted by the league until Somers gets on his feet again and offers to buy it back. Colonel Ruppert and Captain Huston, of New York; Charlie Comiskey, of Chicago; and Joe Lannin, of Boston, are all men of wealth, and a combination of them can easily be formed to carry through this plan suggested.

### GRIFMEN MAY YET HIKE.

If the league does purchase the Cleveland Club, it is more than probable that Gandil, Morgan and Hoehling will be turned over to the Indians. If the bankers' committee refuses to allow this suggested plan to be carried out, the Old Fox will hardly do any such charitable act, but will use his men in possible trades with different clubs in the big leagues.

Ban Johnson told newspaper men in Cleveland yesterday that he believed the league was shuffling themselves so that they could announce that the Indians would be strengthened by the addition of a first baseman, second baseman, at least one good pitcher and possibly a catcher. These players are believed to be Gandil, Morgan, Hoehling and possibly Albinism, though this latter man is the first connecting link with the Cleveland Indians. Manager Griffith declines to name the men he is willing to send to Cleveland, contenting himself with saying that he will do anything possible to assist his old friend, Somers.

That Ban Johnson is the czar in his own league is shown by his refusal to promulgate the sale of Sam Agnew from the Browns to the Red Sox. His action has stirred up the blood of Joe Lannin, who said today that he would make a fight to keep Agnew. Lannin, however, made public today the intention of Bill Carrigan to become a bench warmer in 1916, giving that as his reason for desiring Agnew to assist Cady and Thomas. Ban Johnson makes no explanation for his refusal to let Agnew go to the Red Sox.

"I see it reported," says Ban Johnson, "that the American League will take some action in regard to the disposition of Frank Baker. It would be impossible to do that. Baker belongs to the Philadelphia club and the league has nothing to say about where he will play."

The boss of the league is absolutely correct in this attitude. Baker is Connie Mack's property in baseball away from the law to order him sent to this or that club. It might be said to remember, too, at this time that Connie Mack has said that Baker will play in Philadelphia in 1916, or not at all.

Bill Phelon, a Cincinnati word-art, has looked over Buck Herzog's 1916 outfit, not counting any Sox yet to be purchased, and opines that the team looks to be the genuine goods. Phelon, since leaving New York for Cincy, has fallen into real Cincinnati habits, wearing rose-colored goggles between October and June. And that the Reds weren't so very bad last year, and even allowing for Redland tendencies, there is much reason for hope.

For one thing, Herzog has apparently strengthened his twirling corps without even calling upon Davenport or Cleveland to keep from listening to Bob "Skip" Dowd, a comeback, is booked for a certain place on the Reds' Cincinnati staff, being a reformer. He is a monthly sure of being a marvel in the National League. Why not? He is a sure to be an improvement on Babe Ruth, because he pitched great ball on an all-star tour last year.

Then there is the Tri-State League, the big noise in the winter. George, once he can hit like a demon to help win his own games. Cochran, and Fran from the Virginia League, and Charlie Caparulo, the spaghetti flinger from the New York State League, who was a pippin last summer, newcomers to be as good as Willie Mitchell, the king of twirlers in the winter circuit, to be ready next year, you can make your own ticket that the Phils won't regret.

Reading the papers these last few days, we have seen the following figures outlined for Branch R. M. O. A. Rickey. Will retire to take up legal practice with Judge George H. Williams, of St. Louis. Will become president of the amalgamated Browns. Will replace Clarence Rowland as manager of the White Sox. Will replace Wilbert Robinson as manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers. Will replace Lee Fohl as manager of the Cleveland club. Will be given a league position by Ben Johnson.

Will play ball again, signing to catch for the White Sox. There have been a couple of other figures for him, but aren't these enough to keep him busy? The Chicago Cubs have completed all plans for their coming training season.

### Difference Comes With Passing Days

In 1901 and 1902 and 1903 the American League needed wads of money to keep alive its battle against the National League. Charlie Somers, of Cleveland, provided something like \$1,000,000 for the fight. In 1915 Charlie Somers needed wads of money to remain in baseball, and the American League offered \$100,000, which was not enough for the purpose.

From 1903 to 1915 three "nothings" dropped off the calculations.

## WOULD NOMINATE TOURNEY PLAYERS

Golfers Favor Abolishing Handicap List For National Amateur Title Event.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Dec. 30.—Opinions of several well-known golfers have been obtained regarding the proposed abolishment of the national handicap list and the substitution of merely a list of those players considered sufficiently good to compete in the national amateur championship.

In the minds of many the plan is a good one, for in the lack of an official rating the vagaries of golf form will not need to be considered to such an extent. Maxwell R. Marston, New Jersey champion, long ago expressed himself as favoring the idea, for, he argues, there is many a man who is rated on the national list at a certain number of strokes who does not have the same classification on the Metropolitan Golf Association list, that happens to be true. Marston suggested last year the policy that the governors of the United States Golf Association have decided to adopt.

Harold H. Hilton, writing in his English magazine, also has dealt with the matter. He considers that there is one inevitable end to the question. It is that the handicapping question in America will gradually assume as complex and involved a character as the handicapping problem in England. It is merely a question of time, as without an official list to work upon State associations can handicap just as they please.

Robert A. Gardner, national amateur champion, is quoted as saying that the elimination of the present list is a "proper thing." "It seems to me," he is quoted as having declared, "that there should be a merit rating of the first ten or fifteen amateurs, while the rest of those deemed eligible make up the body of the list. I have no objection to the championship from a handicap of three, but there are any number of players who are so close that the difference in stroke rating is merely a matter of a few strokes, and really constitutes a merit rating. Any one of this group is liable to beat a man of better rating and win the championship. I think the effort to classify all the players qualified is too big and too thankless a task for the committee, and with the above qualifications, it is a simple matter of the handicap list a good deal."

Another well-known player who favors the elimination of the present list is William C. Fowles, Jr., the 110 national champion.

"I am inclined to think that the position is well taken," he said, "it is an extremely difficult task to give the proper ratings, and the use which is made of these ratings would seem to be very small in view of the labor in compiling them."

On the other hand, there are those who believe that the effort is really worth the candle, claiming that it is a tangible way of recognizing the work of a golfer, and also serves as a reward which is held by the player as a trophy. The actual trophies won during the season.

### Howser Tops Rollers In Dot Tournament

Eddie Howser, with a total of 1,291, was leading the bowlers in the Palace dot tournament up to today.

He was closely followed by Roberts, with 1,280, and Carroll, with 1,276. Following is the standing:

Howser, 1,291; Wells, 1,280; Carroll, 1,276; Muller, 1,271; Harkins, 1,269; King, 1,258; Patterson, 1,235; Bailey, 1,220; Lewis, 1,213; Chapin, 1,197; Coleman, 1,175; Allen, 1,161; Lucas, 1,158; Plunkett, 1,158; Schott, 1,157; Lantry, 1,145; Baird, 1,142; Williams, 1,138; Watson, 1,138; Jolliffe, 1,135; Wood, 1,131; George, 1,129; Eatep, 1,127; Riston, 1,125; B. Patterson, 1,122; Riffel, 1,113; Jones, 1,111; Woltz, 1,109; Heinemann, 1,108; Wheeler, 1,104; Schrader, 1,101; Henderson, 1,100; Barry, 1,097; Hollidge, 1,097; Pratt, 1,096; Tompkins, 1,088; McConey, 1,089; May, 1,081; Mack, 1,081; Cain, 1,072; Clarke, 1,062; Michael, 1,068; Duckett, 1,065; Jones, 1,061; Dietz, 1,065; Hall, 1,049; Johnson, 1,031.

### Urges Spring Training For Big League Umpires

CHICAGO, Dec. 30.—Spring training for umpires will be advocated at the coming meeting of the National League club owners in Cincinnati next week.

Charles H. Wegman, purchaser of the Chicago Nationals, and Charlie H. Hays, secretary of the club, said today they would urge the adoption of the plan. It is proposed to have the umpires accompany the club to the spring training camps. The plan was tried in the Federal League last season and was declared to be a success.

### Murnane Quits Game.

BOSTON, Dec. 30.—President Timothy H. Murnane, for many years head of the New England league, has announced today that he would not be a candidate for the position again. The annual meeting and election of officers is being held here today. Murnane is an experienced player and his good management has kept the New England league in the field against all opposition.

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## Jones May Ask Share In Club's Ownership

Acquaintances of Former White Sox Leader Say He Won't Manage Unless He Is Allowed to Become a Magnate of American League.

ST. LOUIS, Dec. 30.—While local baseball fans and critics have been enthralled over the consolidation of the St. Louis Browns and Cardinals, and predicting a world's championship for Fiedler Jones, few seem to have seriously considered the fact that Jones has not agreed as yet to manage the consolidated American-Federal League club.

There is no doubt that Jones will be delighted to have an all-star team under his command, but it must also be remembered that Jones' chief ambition is to become a big league magnate. The Browns were forced to give Jones stock in the local club before he would consent to manage the team, and it is very probable that a similar concession will be made before he will agree to take charge of the Browns.

It was this ambition to own a large block of the stock in a big league club that prevented Jones from remaining with the Chicago White Sox, the team with which he established his great reputation as a baseball pilot. After winning a sensational American League race and a world's championship with the White Sox, Jones

endeavored to purchase several thousand dollars' worth of stock in the club. When owner Charles Comiskey refused to sell him an interest in the club, Jones resigned his position and entered the lumber business.

A few years after his withdrawal from the American League, Jones was offered an opportunity to buy stock in the St. Louis Browns. Bob Hedges wanted to let him buy into the club so that Jones could manage the team. Comiskey and Ban Johnson strenuously objected to the scheme, however, and Hedges was forced to withdraw his offer.

This is believed to have caused the friction which is said to have existed between Johnson and Hedges for a number of years. Comiskey, too, was reported to have severed friendship with the local magnate as a result of his efforts to bring Jones back into the league, and it is commonly believed that this enmity was directly responsible for the attempt to sell Hedges' franchise to the Racine Club combine.

Hedges, however, was too shrewd a

business man to let Johnson, Comiskey or anyone else put anything over on him. The Browns put up \$30,000 for an option on the club, but failed to raise the balance of the purchase price, and the money reverted to Hedges. This is a more incidental in the fortune made by the colonel during his fifteen-year connection with baseball.

Getting back to the Jones phase of our narrative, we must add that the former White Sox leader was keenly disappointed at the attitude of Johnson and Comiskey. He swore vengeance on the big moguls of the American League, and, returning to Portland, accepted the presidency of the Northwestern League so as to keep in touch with the trend of affairs in baseball.

Jones believed that some day the opportunity to break into the big leagues as a magnate would be afforded him. He waited until July, 1914, when the Browns sought to persuade him to supplant Mordecai Brown as manager of the Terriers. After dickering with the club's interests for several weeks, Jones accepted the position as manager on condition that he be allowed to purchase an interest in the club.

Taking into consideration that the Federal League no longer exists, it is difficult to figure how Jones can gain stock in the Browns equivalent to the value of that which he owns in the Federal League club unless Phil Ball and Otto Stifel agree to take him in. The balance of the club stockholders will probably be forced to stand a big assessment on their stock if they are to be included in the reorganization.

### Covington Forfeits.

Covington forfeited to Christ Lutheran in the Sunday School Basketball League last night.

Young Thomas or Harry Glenn of Baltimore, may be stacked up against Kid Greek in the semi-final at Annapolis New Year Day according to the latest word from the management.

Word is expected from Harry Glenn today as to his ability to come here for the battle. The promoters, however, will leave the principals in the section of the entertainment until tonight before announcing definitely who will step in the ring.

In the meantime Tommy Lowe and Willie Houck, who will furnish the principal scrapping event of the card in the second round are in top shape. The lads have met twice before at fifteen rounds each time and have quit even.

Terry Jones and Yellow Sluggers will meet in the first of the prelims immediately followed by a four-round engagement between Lewis and Eddie Lewis, both of southeast Washington. The third of the preliminaries should prove the best as Jack Boland, who conquered Roddy Day, Tommy Lowe's sparring partner, at the last show, will meet Soldier Jimmy Dutch.

### SEMI-WINDUP BOUT ANNOUNCED TONIGHT

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Silk Knitted Neckwear, \$2 and \$2.50 grades \$1.19

Mocha Gloves, \$2.00 grade \$1.39

Cape Gloves, \$1.50 grade \$1.15

Angora Mufflers, \$1.50 grade 89c

Angora Mufflers, \$2.00 grade \$1.19

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